

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) submitted comments to the Bureau of Reclamation regarding the Two-Gates project. The Bureau of Reclamation released a Draft Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) for the proposed Two-Gates project for public review. A public meeting was held in Fresno on October 26, 2009 at 6:30pm. The text of the letter is below.

October 26, 2009

Mr. Mario Manzo Bureau of Reclamation 2800 Cottage Way, MP-730 Sacramento, CA
95825

Re: Two-Gate Fish Protection Demonstration Project

Dear Mr. Manzo:

This statement is to express my strong support for expedited implementation of the Two-Gate Fish Protection Demonstration Project (Two-Gates). As you know, California is in the midst of its third below average rainfall year. While it is acknowledged that a percentage of the shortfall is due to poor hydrologic conditions, the impact of increasing federal restrictions on water supply deliveries that would otherwise have been conveyed to the Westside of the San Joaquin Valley cannot be overstated. At a time when much of the state is receiving at or near normal deliveries, water supply allocations by the State Water Project and the federal Central Valley Project to the two-thirds of California's population south of the Delta have been respectively only at 40% and 10% of normal. Sadly, the regulatory contributions to our drought crisis continue.

Moreover, the immediate impacts of the Delta smelt biological opinion have contributed to the adverse economic impacts on the westside of the Valley. Water supply reductions coupled with an economic downturn has led to unemployment in Valley cities and communities as high as 30% and 40%, with tens of thousands of jobs lost, and approximately 500,000 acres of some of our nation's most productive farmland fallowed. Of equal concern to the farmers and farmworkers in the 20th Congressional District is the shadow of the salmon, green sturgeon and steelhead biological opinion looming over future water deliveries, and thus their very livelihood.

Water is the lifeblood of the Valley. Any short, mid, and/or long-term projects that could lead to water supply reliability for water users south of the Delta will be critical as we find solutions to repair our broken and inadequate water system. The Two-Gates project is an example of a

desperately-needed near term tool that can provide for both enhanced water supply benefits and species protection. It is my hope that Reclamation will exert due diligence in holding the respective fish agencies to task to ensure an expedited timeline. This drought, heaven forbid, may continue into a fourth or fifth dry year, and any interim solutions that would provide immediate relief must be implemented expeditiously.

Sincerely,

JIM COSTA

Member of Congress